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The NEBLINE, June 2002

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NFBA Helps Producers Analyze Their Farming Business

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

The Nebraska Farm Business Association (NFBA), is a fee-based, nonprofit organization partially supported by University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension. NFBA helps farmers to keep accurate financial records, file income tax returns and to analyze their profitability status. Individual farm records are kept confidential, but by combining records into summaries, much can be learned about overall farm profitability in Nebraska.

The NFBA publishes an annual Production Ag Profitability Report summarizing the average results of the profitability analysis performed for their clients combined with producers enrolled in a similar program that is conducted through the community colleges in Nebraska known as the Nebraskaland Farm and Ranch Management Educational Program. In the summary report, they report income, operating expenses, family living expenses and profit or loss for the clients in the program. They also report income and expenses grouped by enterprise type (e.g., irrigated corn on rented land) and by expense category (e.g., fertilizer). Net cash farm income (before deducting family living expenses) are reported three ways; for the group as a whole, for the 33 percent of the group having the highest profitability and for the group in the lowest

33 percent in terms of profitability.

Some trends become apparent when one reads these summaries from year to year. For example, the largest operations, in terms of gross farm income, are not necessarily the most profitable year in and year out. While marketing skills are important, marketing cannot be consistently correlated with high profitability. Generally, when results are averaged, there is little difference in the price received for goods sold between the top profit group and the average. The consistent differences come on the expense side of the ledger. Profitable operators seem to know where to spend their money to receive the highest return on their investment. Operations that are well managed with serviceable and reliable, but not necessarily new, buildings, facilities and equipment tend to rise to the top of the profitability list year after year.

Net farm income was down in 2001 as compared to previous years. Average net income (prior to subtracting family living expenses and income tax liabilities) in 2001 were \$36,025 which represent a 25 percent decline from the 2000 year

New Director at NFBA



Gary Bredensteiner (right) will be stepping down as director of Farm Management Operations in July after serving in that post since the NFBA was founded in Nebraska 27 years ago. Bredensteiner, widely recognized as a top farm business analyst and tax law expert, will be officially retiring but plans to continue working part-time on a consulting basis for NFBA for a few more years. Replacing Bredensteiner in the leadership role will be Terry Prokop (left). Terry has worked at NFBA as an Extension Farm Business Associate for the past 6-1/2 years. Prokop plans to divide his time between his new duties as director and his former duties working with clients.

average of \$48,279. It is below the 19-year average net farm income of \$40,112.

As always, nonfarm income contributed greatly to the cash flow and increase in net worth in 2001. The average net farm income was \$36,025. Nonfarm income was \$21,561. Family living expenses, including income and social security taxes, was \$46,098. This leaves a net worth change of \$11,488 for the average farm in the program for 2001.

Each client enrolled in the full program receives a confi-

dential report for their individual operation. In this report, they can find their profitability by enterprise type, overall net farm income and net equity change since last year. The analysis also includes the major financial ratios used by analysts and lenders such as: debt to asset ratio, current ratio, depreciation expense ratio, etc.

In this author's opinion, the most valuable part of the program is the break down of income and expense by type of enterprise, showing catego-

rized costs for all direct expenses and allocated expenses such as machinery depreciation. This can then be compared to the averages of other producers in the program. Without some means to compare one's own farm operation against a peer group, a farmer doesn't have a place to begin to look for inefficiency in the operation. But by comparing one's individual costs and returns to the group as a whole and to the operations in the upper 33 percent profitability group, a member may recognize

see NFBA on page 11

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For your convenience!

UNL Cooperative Extension
in Lancaster County
SATELLITE OFFICE

located at

LANCASTER EVENT CENTER
84th & Havelock, Lincoln

Main office at 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Ste. A
Phone for both offices: 441-7180
Visit us virtually at: lancaster.unl.edu

Local Grower Turns to Barley Straw as an Alternative Crop

Most folks don't remember the last time they saw a field of barley growing near Lincoln, Nebraska. Yet Marlan Johnson who lives and farms northwest of Eagle is experimenting with barley as an alternative crop this year. Johnson, shown standing in his 10 acre barley field, is a grain and livestock producer with deep roots in western Cass County. In fact, Marlan is the fourth generation in his family to farm in the area. He now owns the original 80 acres that his great grandfather homesteaded in 1867.

Johnson, who produces corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa and beef cattle was selected by the US Junior Chamber of Commerce as National Outstanding Young Farmer in 1989.



Marlan Johnson is shown standing in his 10 acre barley field.

He is currently serving as National President of the Outstanding Farmers of America. A graduate of Waverly High

School and the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture, Marlan has been interested in alternative crops for some time.

He is a charter member of Southeast Nebraska Area Producers (SNAP), serving as the group's president in 2001. SNAP is a cooperative of growers who, collectively, are exploring alternatives to growing corn and soybeans and depending on governmental subsidy programs for economic survival.

Johnson hit on the idea of growing barley as an alternative crop after visiting with Lancaster County Extension Educator, Tom Dorn. Dorn has been following the use of barley straw as an alternative to chemical control measures for algae control in ponds and lakes for several years. He reports, "I haven't promoted using barley straw for algae control because

see BARLEY STRAW on page 11

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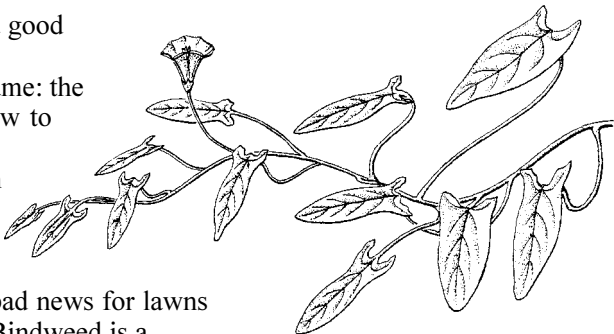


Horticulture

Bindweed Season is Here

There is a good reason behind bindweed's name: the stems can grow to eight feet, intertwining in and among other plants. Bindweed is bad news for lawns and gardens. Bindweed is a perennial that quickly spreads by seed and runners. The roots may grow to 20 feet deep.

Two things will help rid the lawn and garden of this diligent plant, old fashioned pulling and a 2,4-D product. Pulling can help eliminate bindweed if it is pulled close to the ground and it is not seeding. Bindweed develops dark seeds usually July through September. It can, however, produce seed as early as June. If the plant is seeding, pulling it will



further spread the seed. Pulling is unlikely to get rid of all bindweed. When it is detected in the yard, begin your spray program. Apply herbicide treatment in the morning when a sunny day is forecast. Keep children and pets away from sprayed weeds until there is no visible liquid on them. Reapplication of the herbicide will probably be necessary in two weeks. Always follow herbicide label directions. (MJF)

Night Blooming Flowers Offer Evening Enjoyment

During the day, most people are hard at work and don't have time to enjoy their gardens. Evenings may be the only time you get a chance to sit back and relax. What could be more relaxing at the end of a long day than a fragrant, luminous garden?

Gardens designed for evening enjoyment are called moon gardens. Plants used in moon gardens have one or more of the following characteristics: evening bloom time, fragrance and white flowers or foliage.

Plants that bloom in the late afternoon or night allow for evening enjoyment. Fragrant flowers provide aromatherapy at the end of a hard day. Illuminated only by moonlight, white or pale flowers and foliage add an celestial quality to a garden.

Several night-blooming flowers that are ideal for a moon garden are listed below. Night blooming flowers rely on a strong fragrance, rather than bright colors, to attract pollinators. Other plant possibilities for a moon garden include artemesia, lamb's ear, fragrant roses, dusty miller and white flowered annuals and perennials.

MOONFLOWER (Ipomea alba) This fragrant flowering vine has large heart shaped leaves. Showy flowers open in the evening and last until the next morning. Moonflowers have a sweet fragrance and can be up to 5 to 6 inches across. Closely related to morning glory, this quick growing annual may climb up to 15 feet. Although it takes a longer and warmer soil conditions to become established, it is every bit as vigorous as the morning glory.

FOUO'CLOCKS (Mirabilis jalapa) This flower is appropriately named. Its blossoms open in late afternoon,



Four O'Clocks

scenting the air with a sweet fragrance before closing the next morning. Plants grow up to 3-feet tall with a bushy habit and blossom continuously from late spring through fall. The 1-inch trumpet-shaped flowers come in shades of red, yellow, white or rose.

YUCCA (Yucca filamentosa) Flowers of this spiky perennial are open all day but at night the droopy blossoms lift and release a soapy smell. Yucca is a broad leaved evergreen that forms a low cluster of long, pointed leaves. During the growing season, a long stalk will grow up to 6 feet tall and produce large numbers of white bell shaped flowers. Once established it may be difficult to remove from the landscape. Yucca is hardy in zones 4 to 9.

FLOWERING TOBACCO (Nicotiana glauca) Nicotiana is an annual plant that produces fragrant, tubular flowers that open in evening. Flowers are borne on draping branches and come in pink, purple, red, white and yellow. Plants grow in any garden soil and prefer full sun to partial shade. (MJF)

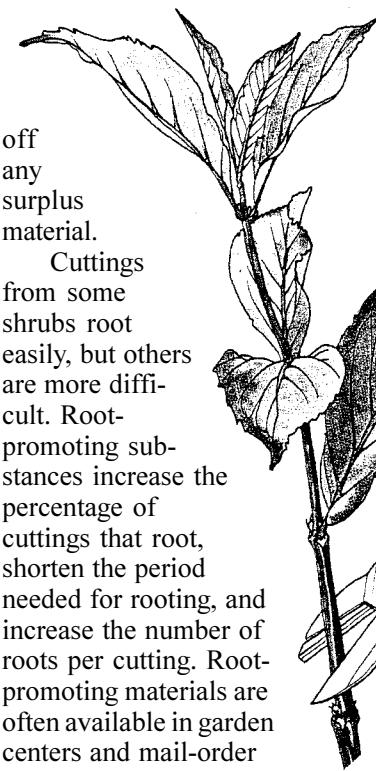
Propagation of Shrubs from Softwood Cuttings

Many ornamental shrubs in the home landscape may be propagated by softwood cuttings. Softwood cuttings are taken in late May through early July from the current season's growth. Cutting material should be flexible but mature enough to snap when sharply bent. Lilac, forsythia, weigela, barberry, potentilla and viburnum are some of the shrubs that may be propagated from softwood cuttings.

A proper rooting medium is needed to successfully root softwood cuttings. The rooting medium must not only retain moisture but also drain well and provide physical support. Coarse sand, perlite, and vermiculite are good rooting materials.

The container that holds the rooting medium must have holes in the bottom for drainage. If only a few cuttings are taken, a large clay or plastic pot should be adequate. A wooden or plastic flat may be used if larger quantities are rooted. Once the container has been filled, the medium should be watered and allowed to drain before the cuttings are inserted.

When taking cuttings, remove plant material with a sharp knife. Softwood cuttings should be approximately 4 to 6 inches long. Pinch off the leaves on the lower half of the cutting. Also remove any flowers. Make a fresh cut just below the point where one or two leaves are attached to the stem (node), then dip the base (cut end) of the cutting in a root-promoting compound. Tap



off any surplus material.

Cuttings from some shrubs root easily, but others are more difficult. Root-promoting substances increase the percentage of cuttings that root, shorten the period needed for rooting, and increase the number of roots per cutting. Root-promoting materials are often available in garden centers and mail-order companies. Most products are in powder form.

To avoid brushing off the powder when inserting the cuttings, make holes in the rooting medium with your finger or a pencil. Insert the cuttings approximately 2 inches deep into the rooting medium. After all the cuttings are inserted, carefully water the medium and let it drain.

Water is critical to the survival of the cuttings. A cutting has no root system to absorb water, yet continues to lose water through its leaves. The cutting will wilt and die if it loses a large quantity of water. Water loss can be reduced by placing a clear plastic bag over the cuttings and container.

Once covered, place the cuttings in bright light, but not direct sunlight. Inspect the cuttings daily. Water the rooting medium if it begin to dry.

Rooting of most deciduous shrubs should occur in six to eight weeks.

Examine a few cuttings after four or five weeks. Carefully dig up several cuttings to check on root development. If rooting is poor, place the cuttings back in the medium, water them in, then cover again with a plastic bag. When the cuttings have a well-developed root system, they should be hardened off in preparation for transplanting. Remove the covering but don't allow the cuttings to wilt. Keep the rooting medium moist. After several days, carefully remove the cuttings and transplant them into individual pots with a good potting mix. The young plants can be planted into the ground in a few weeks. Home gardeners may want to grow them in the garden for one or two years before moving the small shrubs to their permanent site in the landscape.

It takes several years for rooted cuttings to become nice-sized plants. However, many gardeners find rooting cuttings and growing the small shrubs to be fun and rewarding. (MJF)

2002 June/July Garden Calendar



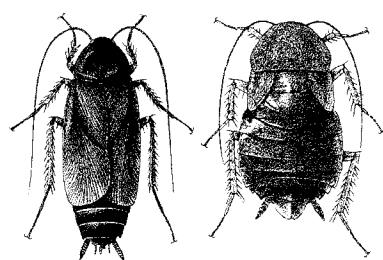
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3 Plug Zoysiagrass	4	5 Watch for cabbage worms	6 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	7 Power rake zoysiagrass	1 8
9	10 Control apple maggot	11	12 Apply fungicide to pines for needle blight	13 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	14	15 Check bluegrass for sod web worm
16	17 Control bagworms	18 Prune spring flowering shrubs	19 Watch for bean leaf beetle	20 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	21	22
23	24 Watch for squash vine borer	25	26 Check roses for black spot	27 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	28	29
30	1 Control bean leaf beetle	2 Remove faded flowers from annual plants	3 Check garden plants for spider mites	4 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	5	6 Plant fall garden
7	8 Control squash vine borer	9 Check tomatoes for blight	10	11 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	12 Pull weeds	13
14	15 Keep garden well watered	16	17 Pick flowers to dry or press	18 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	19	20
21	22	23 Divide iris	24 Prune suckers on maple tree	25 Backyard Farmer 7 p.m. NETV	26	27
28	29 Store extra seeds	30	31 Turn compost pile			

Many of us need reminders. That is the purpose of this calendar. Check the calendar each month and follow the recommendations if they are necessary in your landscape situation. (MJF)

See a Roach? Identify it Before you Spray

Two types of cockroaches seem to suddenly appear during the early summer months. Oriental cockroaches and wood roaches are easily confused, because they look somewhat similar. It is important to be able to identify them because, unlike oriental cockroaches that breed inside, wood roaches don't. Other than stepping on the offending wood roach, no controls are needed. Here's how you tell the difference between these two types of roach.

Oriental cockroaches

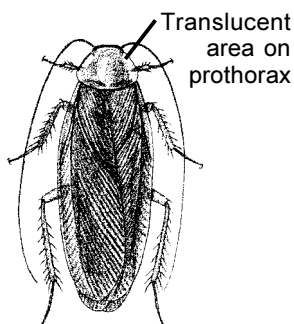


Oriental cockroach: male (left), female (right)

The adult oriental cockroach is about 1-1/2 inches long. The female is stout, shiny black and wingless. The male has short wings that do not cover the

abdomen. Male oriental roaches cannot fly—their body is too heavy and wings too short. These roaches can survive Nebraska winters outside—usually under bricks, mulch or in some kind of vegetative cover. Indoors, oriental roaches, (aka, “waterbugs”) need a high moisture environment and are most often found in basements. If they are found in other parts of the house, it could indicate moisture problems, like leaky plumbing.

Wood cockroaches



Woods cockroach (male)

There are two different species of wood cockroaches that people find in this part of Nebraska. Adult males of the

larger species are about 1-3/4 inches in length; the smaller species is about one inch long. Male wood roaches are elongated and have wings that cover their abdomen. They are also good flyers. They are found inside because the males are attracted to house lights and squeeze through window frames. Wood cockroaches are associated with woodlots and live under bark of trees, but sometimes they live under wood shingles of houses. Female wood cockroaches cannot fly and are not often found inside homes. The key identifying feature is a translucent area on the outside edge of the thorax and along the outside edge of the wing.

Other Roaches

There are several other species of roach that can be found inside the house. For information about treating roaches, check out the Cockroach Control Manual on the web (<http://pested.unl.edu/cockcom.htm>) or purchase a copy at the Lancaster County Extension Office. (BPO)

Environmental Focus



EQIP Works With Producers to Conserve Natural Resources

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was created as part of the 1996 Farm Bill to address environmental issues on farmlands and ranchlands. The program encourages environmental enhancement and stewardship by providing technical and financial assistance for eligible farmers and ranchers to deal with soil, water and natural resource concerns on their land.

Unlike the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a large component of EQIP focuses on livestock issues, with 50 percent of funds being allocated specifically for livestock production. EQIP will pay up to 75 percent cost share for many practices that will benefit the environment and improve livestock production. These practices could include cross fencing, pasture

renovation, seeding, water management, equipment rental, and brush removal. Landowners may also apply for EQIP funds for wildlife habitat or structural problems (i.e. erosion, terracing) on their land.

According to Dennis Schroeder, NRCS District Conservationist, the recently signed 2002 Farm Bill will have an increase in funding for EQIP, which should result in a larger portion of applications being funded in Lancaster County.

Producers interested in the program should contact Dennis Schroeder at the NRCS office, 6030 S. 58 St., Suite C or call at 423-9683.

For general information about EQIP, you can visit the Natural Resource Conservation Service Web site at: www.nrcs.usda.gov (DS)

Are Carpenter Ants Killing My Trees?

Lancaster County residents have many questions about the carpenter ants they find in and around their homes. A question commonly asked is whether carpenter ants are responsible for the declining health of a tree. In order to answer that question, let's start with the basics.

Carpenter Ants Do Not “Eat Wood”

Most people that contact the extension office believe carpenter ants “eat wood” like termites. This is a very common misconception about carpenter ants. Carpenter ants do not “eat wood.” Carpenter ants eat plant material, insects (even termites) and other food they find out in the yard or in your home. So, if carpenter ants don't eat wood, why are they found in places where wood is damaged and hollowed out?

Carpenter ants find wood that is already damaged and starting to rot and use it as a place to live. They take advantage of the damaged wood because it has all the conditions necessary for the ants to have a successful nest site. Once they find the damaged wood, the ants begin building a nest. As the colony grows, they continue to scrape out more wood. That is why you sometimes find sawdust at the base of trees that have carpenter ant colonies in them. The ants don't need to eat the wood, just use the location as a place to live.

It is likely that every tree in



Samples of the black carpenter ant, *Camponotus pennsylvanicus*, are frequently brought to the Lancaster County Extension office for identification.

your yard is a potential site for carpenter ants to have a nest. Trees are naturally exposed to a number of conditions that can cause damage: age, disease, insects and the environment. When parts of the tree are damaged, the wood begins to rot and decay, making it very easy for the ants to scrape out. The nests usually remain in the rotted, decayed wood, but some nests may gradually grow big enough to extend into sound wood of the tree.

Carpenter Ants Are Only a Symptom

Carpenter ants in trees are not directly harmful to the tree. Control is not essential for the tree's health, since the ants are only taking advantage of something that is already happening to the tree. Without the original damage or disease, the carpenter ants would not have found a site suitable to build a nest in the first place.

Control in Trees

Control of carpenter ants inside trees is difficult but can be

done as a way to reduce the chance of ants moving to your home. Carpenter ant colonies located inside trees commonly form satellite colonies inside a nearby home wall or on a nearby roof. The control options available aren't going to permanently rid a tree of carpenter ants especially from a tree that is already in

decline. You may have to re-treat each year. Dust insecticides labeled for use on trees in the landscape are suggested for control. Apply the dust directly into the nest cavity.

Plugging or sealing tree cavities or treating tree wounds with wound dressings is not advised. Such treatments are unnecessary and will not eliminate or prevent decay or any future carpenter ant activity. Also, cutting down otherwise viable trees that happen to be infested with carpenter ants is generally not necessary.

You can reduce opportunities for carpenter ant nests in trees by keeping damaged limbs trimmed. If you have concerns about the health of a tree, contact a local arborist to have the tree evaluated.

Carpenter Ants and Your Home

Now that you have a better understanding of carpenter ants in trees, consider the “human home.” What is your home? Basically a big, dead tree cut up

see CARPENTER ANTS on p. 11

EPA Urges Caution When Using Disinfectants in Ducts

Businesses and homeowners considering having their heating ducts cleaned should be aware the products and processes involved have raised some concerns from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Contractors may recommend applying a sanitizer or disinfectant to prevent future mold growth following duct cleaning. However, the EPA cautions the antimicrobial agents used in this process may cause acute or long-term health effects.

While there are antimicrobial agents registered with EPA for use on hard surfaces such as sheet metal, few are registered for use in heating systems and duct work. Those that are registered have not had the extensive evaluation that the EPA now believes may be appropriate.

In a few cases, the antimicrobial agents sprayed into duct work has caused burning eyes, headaches, itchy skin, nausea or sore throats. It's not proven if the antimicrobial agents are effective.

Routine duct cleaning in the home is not recommended, according to the EPA. Contractors may raise the specter of

how dirty ducts can become after years of air flowing through them and the likelihood of mites or mold in the duct work, but it's never been shown conclusively that duct cleaning prevents health problems. It's also unlikely the dirt lining the duct will come back into the home.

Individuals may believe the ducts have mold or other biological contaminants in them. If mold is the reason you are considering duct cleaning, be sure to have the contractor show you any mold that exists. If you question whether it is mold, have a sample analyzed by a qualified laboratory.

Mold growth should be handled by identifying the cause of the mold growth and reducing the source of moisture to prevent further growth along with removal.

The publication “Should You Have the Air Ducts in Your Home Cleaned?” is available on the EPA Web site at www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/airduct.html.

SOURCE: Shirley Niemeyer, NU Housing and Environment Specialist. (BPO)



Farm Views



Pesticide Container Recycling

The Nebraska Pesticide Container Recycling program, coordinated by UNL Cooperative Extension, provides a recycling opportunity for plastic from one and 2-1/2 gallon containers. Crop oil and adjuvant containers may also be recycled. More than 40 inspection/collection sites are available in Nebraska.

The Lancaster County Extension office, in conjunction with local businesses, will be holding public collection days from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the following locations:

- **JUNE 28** — Farmers Cooperative Bennet
- **JULY 12** — Firth Co-op Firth
- **JULY 19** — Farmers Cooperative Waverly

The Lancaster County Extension office also accepts containers during business hours at 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln from now until Oct. 31.

All liquid pesticide containers require proper rinsing (triple rinsing or pressure rinsing). Rinse the containers immediately after emptying, and place the rinse water in the spray tank for application upon the labeled site. Caps and plastic labels or multilayered paper labels must be

removed.

Cooperative Extension is excited about this program that places a high regard on environmental stewardship. More and more applicators are participating each year. Last year, more than 171,530 pounds (86 tons) of plastic from pesticide containers were recycled in Nebraska.



Plastic from pesticide containers are recycled into some of these products.

This plastic is kept separate from regular recycling channels and only goes into environmentally safe uses such as pesticide shipping pallets, agricultural drain tile, parking lot tire bumpers, rail road ties, plastic lumber, etc.

For more information about the pesticide container recycling program, call Tom Dorn at 441-7180 or visit online at <http://pested.unl.edu/pestrecy.htm>.

Controlling Algae in Ponds and Lakes

The dream of many folks in the urban setting is to move to the country, live on an acreage and have their own pond for fishing, swimming, livestock water or just because it is pretty.

One of the perennial problems faced by pond owners in rural and suburban settings is excessive algae growth, also called algae blooms. Algae are divided into three classifications. Single-celled (planktonic), filamentous and Chara. Planktonic algae remain diversely suspended in the water and turn the water a more or less uniformly green or blue-green color. Filamentous algae species string together, becoming floating mats of "pond moss." The third type of algae called Chara or muskgrass, are large green algae that are anchored to the bottom but do not extend above the surface. Chara is stem-like, with thin, leaf-like structures, and is often confused with seed-bearing aquatic plant species. When crushed, chara produces a musky odor.

For maximum production, all plants need adequate water, sunlight and nutrients. Algae is no exception. In a pond, water and sunlight are given, the limiting factor is plant nutrients. The first step in algae control is to reduce the movement (loading) of nutrients into the water. Whenever I get a call about an algae problem in a pond, I try to identify the source of nutrients that is causing the problem. The two primary nutrients that must be controlled are nitrogen and phosphorus, with phosphorus being the larger concern when it comes to algae control.

If applications of com-

mercial fertilizer or animal wastes applied to the soil surface are followed by a hard rain, they may be carried directly into the pond by runoff water. In addition to movement of surface applied products carried in the runoff water, nutrients can be carried to the pond attached to soil particles that erode from slopes and end up in the pond as silt.

Nitrogen and phosphorus are water-soluble nutrients. Nutrients that are incorporated

The first step in algae control is to reduce the movement (loading) of nutrients into the water.

into the soil by tillage or surface-applied and later dissolved by rainwater and carried into the soil may also find their way into the pond. Most of our southeastern Nebraska soils can be classified as silty clay loam topsoil overlaying heavier clay subsoil. When water that is percolating down through the soil profile encounters the clay layer, its downward movement is impeded. It then moves downslope along the boundary and may emerge as a spring in a creek bottom or in the pond itself. In addition to applied fertilizer or animal waste, another source of potential nutrient loading can be domestic wastewater. Seepage from sewage lagoons and septic disposal fields also becomes part of the soil water matrix and can move downslope as described above.

Once nutrient loading has been reduced to the extent possible, chemical treatments can be used to control algae in a pond. Copper compounds such as copper sulfate and various chelated copper products are

both safe and effective when used according to directions. Some aquatic herbicides that are used for seed-bearing aquatic plant species are effective against certain algae species as well. For more information on chemical control methods, go to the aquaculture page in the Lancaster County Extension Agriculture and Acreage section under livestock at www.lancaster.unl.edu/ag/livestok/aquaculture.htm

An alternative to chemical control is described in a University of Nebraska educational resource "Controlling Pond Algae with Barley Straw" (NF00-429) by John Holz, UNL water quality specialist, located online at www.ianr.unl.edu/pubs/wildlife/nf429.htm. Holz tells of work conducted at the Centre for Aquatic Plant Management in the United Kingdom using barley straw to control pond algae. As the straw decomposes in the lake, it releases a chemical which inhibits algal growth. He recommends applying straw in mid-late April in order to allow sufficient time for the products of decomposition to build to sufficient levels to control summer algal growth in Nebraska ponds and lakes. Roch Gaussoin, extension turfgrass specialist has worked with several golf course managers who used barley straw for algae control. He reports that if the straw is put into the pond early in the spring, before any noticeable algae growth occurs, the managers had good results.

See page 1 for a feature story about a local farmer who is growing barley in 2002 and plans to market the straw to pond owners for algae control in the spring of 2003. (TD)

Sample Your Hay to Get Accurate Nutrient Analyses

Nutrient concentration varies considerably among forages. Values vary from one forage specie to another, one cutting to another throughout the year, the stage of growth when harvested, whether the hay was rained on while in the windrow, etc. That is why the university recommends forage testing as a regular part of your livestock operation. For forage tests to provide an accurate reading of forage quality, the sample must accurately represent the hay. Reaching into a bale and pulling out a hunk of hay will not give you a good sample. Nor will gathering a single flake of hay.

The only effective method to sample long hay is by using a core sampler. If you don't have one, you can buy one from many ag supply catalogues or forage testing labs. Lancaster County

Extension has a probe that you can check out by leaving a deposit which is returned when you bring the probe back.

Once you have a hay probe, Dr. Bruce Anderson, extension forage specialist, recommends that you use it to collect one core every 15 to 20 bales that came from the same field and same cutting. Keep samples from different cuttings separate. The proper sampling procedure is to probe the bales, cutting across the grain. On square bales, probe the center of the bale from the end (between the twine or wires). On round bales, probe toward the center of the bale from the rounded edge. Then combine all the samples from a cutting into one larger sample to send to the lab.

If there is decayed or moldy material that you will discard or

your animals will not eat, do not include it in your sample. That way you will have a sample that is similar to the actual diet of your livestock. By following these sampling techniques, you will get accurate nutrient analyses of your hay and be able to use it more effectively. However, if you plan to sell the hay, you must include this less desirable material in your sample to accurately represent all the hay to be sold.

Forage testing can be an effective marketing tool. If you were a hay buyer deciding between two hay sources, one where the nutrient analysis is known and the other where nothing definite is known about the quality, wouldn't you rather buy the known commodity? Hay tests report various nutrient values such as crude protein,

energy values (expressed several ways) and minerals (calcium, phosphorus, etc.). In addition to reporting specific nutrient values, most labs use the analysis to calculate a rating of overall quality. This is commonly referred to as the relative feed value (RFV).

Not everybody needs the highest quality hay to meet the nutrient requirements of their particular animals but they need to know what they are getting so they match the hay quality to the specie of animal and time of year (stage of pregnancy, lactating, breeding, etc.).

To understand relative feed values, let's look at three examples. An RFV of 100 is mediocre hay but it is usually adequate to meet the protein and energy requirements for older, dry cows in the middle one-third

of pregnancy. An RFV of 120 - 140 is generally suitable for pregnant beef heifers that are still growing and for beef cows that are about to freshen. An RFV of 150 and above is considered dairy quality.

Even when the quality of one batch of hay doesn't meet the nutrient requirements of the animals, the livestock producer may be able to feed two or more forage sources in specific proportions that together will provide the nutrient needs of the animals being fed. Alternately, one may feed non-forage supplements to balance the protein, energy and/or mineral needs of the animals they are feeding. Without the hay quality test, it is not possible to accurately develop the rations needed to meet the animal's nutrient needs at least cost. (TD)

Wildflowers and Native Plants

Wildflowers and native plants can be a unique and interesting addition to the home landscape. The terms wildflower and native plant are often used synonymously; however, in many cases they are not the same. Wildflowers are described as flowering herbaceous plants (forbs) that grow with little or no human assistance. They can be native or introduced. Native plants in the Great Plains are generally described as those found growing in a defined area prior to the arrival of European settlers. Native plants may be grasses, forbs, shrubs or trees. Wildflowers and native plants also may be classified as annuals, biennials or perennials.

Wildflowers can be used as landscape plants, as fresh cut flowers, in dried floral arrangements, to attract butterflies and for planting in mini-meadows or prairies. They also may be used in low maintenance areas and in sites requiring drought-tolerant plants. However, some native species may be less drought tolerant than nonnative species.

A wildflower planting in the home landscape may vary from a single plant in the flower garden to multiple plantings in large areas. Start with a small wildflower planting and expand it as time permits. A site that will not grow other plants and weeds or has some type of soil problem, will probably not be ideal for wildflowers. Sun-loving wildflowers require sunny sites and shade-loving wildflowers require shady sites. The site and



Butterfly Milkweed is a common perennial wildflower

the wildflowers used there should be compatible.

Plant material can be obtained through various sources including local nurseries, mail order companies, wildflower societies and other organizations. It can be collected from wild or cultivated plants, but caution should be used when collecting plants or seed from native sites. Wildflowers growing in natural areas often do not survive transplanting and sometimes natural populations can be disturbed, damaged or eliminated by collecting plants or seeds. Seed from some wildflower species require special conditions to induce germination. Some wildflowers are endangered or rare and should not be collected.

The planting may consist of a single plant or many types of plants and/or a combination of domesticated flowers, grasses, native plants and wildflowers. Mini-meadows or prairie plantings can be used in small residential plots and commercial landscapes. Prairie plantings are alternatives to traditional lawns and may be used to attract butterflies and wildlife. Design

by planning. For complex designs and plantings on large commercial sites, consider consulting a landscape designer or someone familiar with prairie restoration. Check local regulations which may limit the type of wildflower plantings you can use.

Aggressive competition from weeds can be a problem in wildflower plantings. In addition,

some wildflowers produce large quantities of seed and can dominate other plantings. Periodically, weeds may need to be eliminated. Herbicides may be used in some plantings, but no one herbicide is available that will control all weeds without harming some wildflowers or grasses. Hand pulling weeds is effective on smaller plantings. Mowing is an effective weed control method during the first year on direct seeded, larger sites. Mow to a height of about six inches. Annuals and perennials planted together can complicate mowing especially during the first growing season.

Providing the right amount of moisture is important. For example, do not overwater plants adapted to dry sites. Over-seeding may be necessary when some species start to disappear.

Some professionals recommend an annual burning of a prairie. However, this is unfeasible, extremely dangerous and is not recommended for home landscapes. A good mowing, followed by raking the loose material, should take its place. (DJ)

Control of Smooth Sumac

Several management practices have been studied for control of smooth sumac. These include mowing or cutting, prescribed burning, herbicide application and various combinations of these methods.

Mechanical treatments (cutting or mowing) are ineffective unless repeated treatments over many years are used to control the abundant resprouts. The sharp stumps resulting from cutting are another drawback and may be a hazard to animals or vehicle tires.

Like cutting, prescribed burning is ineffective. Single spring fires can result in nearly 100 percent topkill of stems, but vigorous resprouting can lead to stem densities higher than those before the fire. Because fire topkills sumac, canopy height and cover is reduced in the short term.

Smooth sumac is a North American native



New sumac sprout following prescribed burn.



Sumac plants one month after prescribed burn.

species, and there are no known biological pathogens that would cause widespread mortality. Some insects do feed on smooth sumac and perhaps restrict its spread and numbers.

Many herbicides are very effective against smooth sumac. They can be applied to the foliage, stem bases or to the soil. Approved herbicides include 2,4-D, Crossbow, Spike, Tordon and Velpar. All are effective on a range of broadleaf plants, but are likely to damage desirable forbs. In addition, Spike and Velpar may harm grasses, especially when pelleted formulations are applied to the soil.

Estimated herbicide costs for 2,4-D LV4 ester, 2,4-D LV4 ester plus Banvel and Tordon 22K were \$6.76, \$20.30 and \$22.81 per acre, respectively, based on 1997 published herbicide prices. The least expensive herbicide, 2,4-D, provided control equal to the more expensive ones.

Application costs would be in addition to product costs, but would be similar regardless of herbicide. Long-term effects over several years were not studied, and it is possible additional treatment with 2,4-D may be necessary to control surviving plants. (DJ)

Urban Agriculture



Some Wood Mulches Can Encourage Turf Mushrooms

Green wood mulch may be the culprit in some nuisance fungi problems.

Turf fungi are harmless, but annoy homeowners by dotting the landscape with their fruiting bodies, commonly known as mushrooms. Mushrooms originate from large networks of thread-like tissue growing underground. When growing conditions are ideal and the fungi have an adequate food source, the tissue gets large enough to form a mushroom above ground. Most mushrooms are two to eight inches tall and one to eight inches in diameter.

Wood chips, mulches and sawdust from stump grindings are good food sources for fungi because they contain large amounts of live organic material. To prevent mushroom growth, avoid using mulches from oaks, cottonwoods or other deciduous trees, which are commonly used as growth medium by many fungi. Instead, use pine or other conifer-based mulches, which have fewer fungi able to grow on them. With any mulch, it will be less favorable for fungi growth when composted. Composted mulches don't have as many readily available food sources for fungi as non-



A typical mushroom

composted or "green" mulches.

Mushrooms already growing in lawns can't be chemically treated, but homeowners can remove them by cutting them at their base. Wear gloves when cutting mushrooms because some produce toxins that may be absorbed by the skin.

For more information on landscape fungi, see educational resource "*Mushrooms, Puffballs, Fairy Rings, and Slime Molds in Turfgrass*" (G89-951-A), available at local University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension offices or online at www.ianr.unl.edu/pubs/plantdisease/g951.htm (DJ)

Check for Bagworms

The bagworm is native to the United States and is found in eastern Nebraska. Bagworms feed on many species of trees and shrubs, but are most

common on junipers. They are rarely a serious problem on deciduous trees, except when larvae move away from evergreens.

In urban areas, bagworms are most common on evergreen trees and shrubs. Juniper, arborvitae, pine and spruce may be killed, if completely defoliated. Less severe attacks can slow growth.

Bagworms feed on shade, orchard and forest trees of nearly every kind, as well as many ornamental shrubs and perennials. Severe attacks are unusual. Since deciduous plants grow new leaves, damage to them is usually not serious. The growth of small or newly planted trees, however, could be slowed by leaf feeding.

Newly hatched larvae begin to spin silken bags around themselves shortly after hatching. The first evidence of infestation is the presence of one-fourth inch bags which are carried almost on end by the

young caterpillars inside. As larvae grow, leaf fragments are added to the bag, which may reach a length of two inches by the end of summer. The adult

female moth is wingless and never leaves the bag. Adult males are small, grey moths with clear wings.

Bagworms overwinter in the egg stage inside female bags fastened to twigs. Eggs hatch in late May and early June, and larvae

feed until late August or early September. Males emerge in September and mate with females through the bag entrance.

Control infestations on small trees and shrubs by removing bags during the winter and spring before the eggs begin to hatch in late May. Destroy bags by burning, immersing in kerosene or by crushing. If bags containing larvae are discarded on the ground, the larvae can return to host plants.

Chemical controls are effective if applied during early stages of bagworm development. For most effective insecticidal control and prevention of damage, apply sprays from mid- to late-June. (DJ)



Bagworm



Food & Fitness



Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

During National Dairy Month in June and throughout the year, enjoy this healthy and easy-to-make smoothie from Pam Schaefer, RD, Program Director, Dairy Council of Nebraska. "This soothing concoction fits wonderfully into the DASH diet. If high blood pressure is in your family...you should know about DASH! DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension and is an eating pattern that has been found to lower blood pressure," says Schaefer. "This diet includes two to three servings of low-fat dairy products and eight to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. This rich and satisfying smoothie will get you started with 1 serving of low-fat dairy and 2 servings of fruit. Enjoy!"

Groovy Smoothies

2 small ripe bananas, cut into chunks
1 cup frozen unsweetened strawberries
1 8-ounce carton lowfat vanilla yogurt
3/4 cup fat-free milk

Place the banana chunks, strawberries, yogurt and fat-free milk into a blender. Cover and blend until smooth. Pour into 2 glasses. Serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings. Nutrition facts per serving: 264 calories; 9 grams protein; 54 grams carbohydrates; 3 grams fat; 8 mg cholesterol; 3 grams fiber; 114 mg sodium.

Food Safety and Salads

Alice Henneman, MS, RD
 Extension Educator

Summer is salad time. As with other foods, it's important to handle fruits and vegetables safely to help prevent food-borne illness. It's especially important to follow safe food practices in summer months when temperatures are warmer and bacteria can grow faster. There is also more chance for contamination as we may eat outside more, especially in sites away from home where there is little or no access to refrigeration and washing facilities.

Following are some steps from a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Talk Paper, "FDA Advises Consumers about Fresh Produce Safety" (May 26, 2000), that consumers can take to reduce the risk of food-borne illness from fresh produce:

- **At the store, purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged.** If buying fresh cut produce, be sure it is refrigerated or surrounded by ice.

- **At home, chill and refrigerate foods.** After purchase, put produce that needs refrigeration away promptly. (Fresh whole produce such as bananas and potatoes do not need refrigeration.) Fresh produce should be refrigerated within two hours of peeling or cutting. Leftover cut produce should be discarded if left at room temperature for more than

two hours.

- **Wash hands often.** Hands should be washed with hot soapy water before and after handling fresh produce or raw meat, poultry or seafood, as well as after using the bathroom, changing diapers or handling pets.

- **Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables with cool tap water immediately before eating.**

Don't use soap or detergents. Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush. Cut away any bruised or damaged areas before eating.

- **Wash surfaces often.**

Cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops should be washed with hot soapy water and sanitized after coming in contact with fresh produce or raw meat, poultry or seafood. Sanitize after use with a solution of 1 teaspoon of chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water.

- **Don't cross contaminate.**

Use clean cutting boards and utensils when handling fresh produce. If possible, use one clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry and seafood. During food preparation, wash cutting boards, utensils or dishes that have come into contact with fresh produce, raw meat, poultry or seafood. Do not consume ice that has come in contact with fresh produce or other raw products.

- **Use a cooler with ice or**

use ice gel packs when transporting or storing perishable food outdoors, including cut fresh fruits and vegetables.

As an extra measure of precaution you may wish to wash prepackaged salads, especially if you are uncertain about how they were cleaned. Don't assume because a food is prepackaged it's ready to eat.

Even if you don't eat the peel of a fruit or vegetable—such as melons—it's still important to wash them. Bacteria from the outer surface can be transferred to the inside of the fruit or vegetable. Discard the outer leaves of leafy vegetables before washing them.

Rinsing fruits and vegetables under running tap water helps remove bacteria. An easy way to wash smaller items such as berries is to place them in a colander and spray them with a kitchen sink sprayer. Gently turn the produce as you spray. As a general rule, wash fruits and vegetables just before using them, not before you store them.

Check for and follow label instructions such as "keep refrigerated" or "use by (date)" on items. This information is frequently found on precut produce at the store.

Periodically, questions about the safety of various fruits or vegetables may arise. If you have questions or concerns, to learn the latest information call the FDA's consumer helpline at 1-888-SAFEFOOD.

Words of Wisdom

The relationship of nutrition to health has long been recognized. Here's a sampler of oft-repeated food and health quotes from the past 400 years. Help yourself to their wit and wisdom!

"Gluttony kills more than the sword."

—George Herbert (1593-1633)

"The best doctors in the world are Doctor Diet, Doctor Quiet and Doctor Merryman."

—Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)

"To lengthen thy life, lessen thy meals."

—Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

"I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind anything else."

—Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)

"Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are."

—Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826)

"An army marches on its stomach."

—Napoleon (1769-1821)

"He who distinguishes the true savor of his food can never be a glutton; he who does not cannot be otherwise."

—Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

"Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside."

—Mark Twain (1835-1910)

"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."

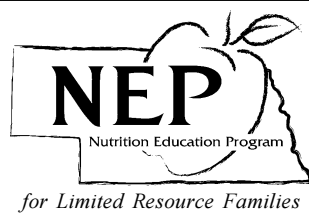
—Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)

"Never eat more than you can lift."

—Miss Piggy, American Puppet Character (1900's)

To sum up the centuries, perhaps Henry Fielding (1707-1754) best expresses both the pleasure and the importance of food: *"We must eat to live and live to eat."*

Do I Pay the Utility Bill or Do I Feed My Family?



Maureen Burson
 Extension Educator

Lincoln Action Program (LAP) families say: 1) paying utilities; 2) finding stable employment; and 3) having enough food are the greatest challenges. "These families are striving to better themselves, but facing ongoing challenges," says Beatty Brasch, Executive Director of LAP. The annual LAP survey involved over 3,400 low-income households this year.

In addition to government funded programs, nonprofit organizations such as the faith community, are vital to fill the huge gap to feed families. Lincoln agencies who provide emergency food and nutrition education programs have seen an increase in demand this past year. The Emergency Food Pantries System through the Lincoln Interfaith Council saw an increase of 8.96 percent of household units receiving food. A total of 17,841 individuals accessed food through the Emergency Food Pantries System. The number of nonprofit corporations accessing the Food Bank of Lincoln increased by 12.75 percent and a total of



Lincoln Action Program families learn practical ways to use the food they receive from generous community donations to the Lincoln Food Bank. This winter, 16 of the 20 participants who learned to make corn chowder in a NEP class, planned to make it at home.

2,087,031 pounds of food was distributed, a 10 percent increase over the past year.

Our community continues to reach out to serve neighbors in need. For example, this past year, the Matt Talbott Kitchen served 94,867 meals; the People's City Mission - 106,558; the Gathering Place - 22,677; and Day Watch - 8,401. FoodNet collected and distributed \$420,000 in perishable foods for redistribution at approximately 40 neighborhood sites.

The Kid's Café, a new partnership with the Food Bank of Lincoln and partially funded through Con Agra, teamed up with Lincoln Action Program and the Northeast Family Resource Center to provide 7,000 meals for children. The 3,100 meals served at the Lighthouse reflect the cultural diversity of the 272 teens who spend many evenings at their "home away from home."

These are just a few of the

many nonprofit community efforts which are vital in keeping people healthy. Agencies put a high priority on case management to support families with a variety of needs. NEP partners with both nonprofit and government agencies to teach families how to prepare safe nutritious meals using the products which low-income families receive.

On a daily basis, the NEP staff sees how generous community volunteers make a big difference in the lives of low-income families. It is our hope local citizens will continue to realize access to nutritious food is a major local challenge. Sharing your time, food and money are ways to get involved. Take time to see how you can make a difference in our community.

Source of Statistics: "Annual Statistical Report, 2001," issued April 2002 by the Lincoln Interfaith Council, Rev. Dr. Norman E. Leach in cooperation with the Lincoln-Lancaster County Food and Hunger Coalition.

Lines from Lynn

Lynn Bush
FCE Council Chair

School's over. Graduation is behind us. Now I can go to summer baseball games and relax and enjoy.

Mark June 24 and July 15 on your calendar.

Monday, June 24, 7 p.m. is our June Family and Community Education (FCE) Council meeting. Presentations will be



made to the winners of the posters and creative writing contests. Clubs responsible are Beltline and Gateway Gourmet.

Monday, July 15, is the Sizzling Summer Sampler. A light supper will be served at 6 p.m. followed by a style show presented by The Vickeridge.

Models are still needed. Call Alice Doane, 786-3555, or the extension office, 441-7180, if

you would be willing to be a model. Cost for the evening is \$10 payable to Lancaster County FCE. Mail your check to register, by July 8, to: Joy Kruse, 850 Adams St., Lincoln, NE 68521. This evening is for FCE members and guests.

Remember the State Convention will be in Sidney, Aug. 19 and 20. You should be receiving information in the FCE Speaks newsletter very soon.

★ FCE News ★

Sizzling Summer Sampler

Monday, July 15

6 to 9 p.m. • Supper at 6 p.m.

Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

Style Show presented by The Vickeridge (6140 Havelock Avenue, Lincoln)

Cost \$10. Make checks payable to FCE Council

Send reservations and check by July 8 to: Joy Kruse, 850 Adams Street, Lincoln, NE 68521

**Mark your calendar today! Plan to attend and invite a friend!
Join the fun and fellowship.**

*Sponsored by
Lancaster County Association for Family and Community Education*

Laugh for a Healthy Life

According to laughter researchers, there really is something to the idea your frame of mind affects the body's health system. How, you may ask.

First, laughing helps you unwind. When you have a good belly laugh going you can't lift anything heavy. Your muscles, except the ones in your face and your abdomen, relax.

Second, it strengthens your immune system. Studies show after people laugh, they have

more immunoglobulin A—the body's warrior against upper-respiratory infections—and other natural substances that fight off illness or kill pain.

Third, your heart rate increases, the oxygen supply to the brain is boosted and your blood flow improves. Then you relax and your body calms down.

Try these ideas for putting more laughter in your life.

• Make a list of fun things and

do them.

- Immerse yourself in humor—watch cartoons or funny movies, go to a comedy club—anything that makes you laugh.
- Learn some jokes and tell them.
- Look for humor in everyday situations.
- Work on learning big belly laughs, not just chuckles.
- Learn to laugh at yourself.
- Learn to find humor in difficult situations. (LJ)

Credit Cards and College Students

According to the Jump Start Coalition for Personal Finance Literacy, only 15% of high school seniors say they have had personal finance education in school. Since many adults are confused about personal finances, it can be assumed teens are equally confused about sticking to budgets, paying bills, balancing a checkbook and being responsible with credit.

So imagine what it is like for a teen going off to college and being bombarded with multiple offers for credit cards, sometimes using a bank account for the first time and "finally being free of the restrictions of home." Temptations abound at every corner and Mom and Dad are no longer around to sound the alarm. It's usually not until college students overdraw their bank account, receive the first phone bill or discover they can't pay the credit charges in full they realize they may have a problem.

Money troubles brought about by overspending using easily available credit is often

cited as a major reason students leave school early. They either don't arrive at school with a clear budget in mind or they choose to ignore it because credit looks so "easy." Horror stories abound of students running up enormous debts in an academic school year without realizing the high price they are paying for the debt incurred.

As parents, you can help students by working with them to devise a budget before leaving for school. They need to understand exactly how much money they will have each month from all sources—work, help from home, scholarships or savings. Then it is important to write down expenses that must be paid each month and those due at the beginning or end of a semester. A good way to ease students into being on their own is to have them keep a detailed diary of expenses the first few months to ascertain whether budgeted amounts are realistic.

Nellie Mae says the average credit card balance for undergraduates is \$2,748. Depending

on the credit card, Annual Percentage Rates (APR) and fees vary widely and it is important to understand these and read the fine print about when introductory APR's may change to higher rates. Students must have an understanding of how quickly charges add up if balances are not paid in full.

Sarah Max, CNN/money staff writer, says it is helpful to give actual examples of the repercussions of not paying bills in full. She says, "For example, \$1,000 worth of pizza and clothing charges will cost nearly \$2,000 if students only make minimum payments on a card with 14 percent interest." She also reminds us tardy customers can face late-payment fees as high as \$30 and can do serious damage to credit reports.

A few frank discussions and opportunities to practice good budgeting and wise use of credit may help avoid the serious consequences of debt both during college and after. (LJ)

Family Living



by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

Five Ways to Prevent a Fall

- Clean up! Remove clutter and boxes, especially from stairs and high-traffic areas. Clean up spills immediately.
- Re-route obstructing electrical cords.
- Fill holes and depressions around your property.
- Read the instructions for proper use of ladders, step stools and other household equipment.
- Replace old light bulbs. But always use the appropriate wattage listed.

Dads Important in Children's Lives

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

The role of men in marriage and the family has changed dramatically over the past two decades and will likely continue to change as more and more mothers of very young children are in the labor market.

Today men often define success as both providing economically for their children and being directly involved in their children's lives according to James A. Levine. This change has brought richness into men's lives, allowing them a humanity and sense of family not previously experienced.

Did you know that:

- Over 90 percent of fathers participate in childbirth activities.
- Babies will bond or form close attachments with fathers as well as mothers. They do not discriminate.



- When fathers spend equal time, babies benefit significantly and show greater intellectual gains and pick up more quickly on social cues.
 - More and more fathers are asking for and receiving custody of children following a divorce. They realize they are capable of raising children.
- June is a great time to acknowledge the very important role fathers play in the lives of their children. Happy Father's Day.

CHARACTER COUNTS! Corner

The S.T.A.R. Process

David Brooks, a nationally known character education author and trainer, recently conducted a workshop in Lincoln. As part of his presentation, he introduced the S.T.A.R. process for making good decisions.

S Stop
T Think
A Act
R Review

Stop gives students time to reflect, cool down, avoid situations and gather their thoughts.

Think helps students make better decisions based on a three step subprocess, the ABC 's of decision-making—alternatives, behavior, consequences.

Act is taking action on a decision after stopping and thinking. Students learn the sentence: "I am choosing to ____." I ACT is an acronym for this step.

Review is an opportunity to reflect on the action. Did the action get the student closer to or further away from goals? How did the action affect others? (LJ)





4-H & Youth

4-H Bulletin Board

Teen Council is Sunday, July 14, 3–5 p.m. at the Schepers' home. Watch your mail for more information. (TK)

4-H Alumni Reunion at State Fair

Connect and reconnect with 4-H friends at the 4-H Alumni Reunion and Breakfast held **Saturday, Aug. 31**, 8–11 a.m. at the Nebraska State Fair! The event is in honor of the 4-H centennial.

You'll find entertainment for the whole family, 4-H memorabilia, a chance to recognize four- and five-generation 4-H families, and honored 4-H alumni. Check out a vintage fashion show at 11 a.m. and afternoon ice cream social with NU's special 4-H Clover Mint flavor.

\$5 advance tickets will be for sale at local Cooperative Extension offices. Ticket-holders will receive half-off the \$6 State Fair gate fee from 8 to 10 a.m. Breakfast tickets will be sold at the door for \$7. (Kids five and under eat free.)

Questions? Contact Trish Spencer at 472-9016.

Putting It All Together

A workshop will be held **Wednesday, July 10** from 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m. for 4-H'ers interested in the Shopping in Style and Attention Shoppers 4-H projects, and is open to those who sew.

The workshops will help you:

- Develop consumer skills that will enable you to make the most of your clothing dollar.
- Practice your modeling skills.
- Learn the latest in hair, accessory and make-up pointers.

The morning will start at "The Buckle" in Gateway Mall. We will meet with a buyer and learn about latest fashions, etc. Lunch will be on your own. At 1 p.m. we'll meet at the Lancaster Extension Education Center for workshops.

4-H Centennial Theme Night at Saltdogs July 12



Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council are sponsoring **4-H Centennial Theme Night** at the **Lincoln Saltdogs Baseball** home game against Joliet on **Friday, July 12**. Game starts at 7:05 p.m. Haymarket Park

(located near 6th & Charleston streets)

4-H'ERS SHOULD GATHER AT 6 P.M. on the promenade north of the main gate

Wear your 4-H garb!

There will be many 4-H fun activities, including:

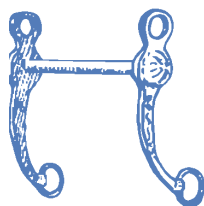
- 4-H'ers will parade onto the field prior to the game
- Lancaster County 4-H'ers Hannah Spencer and Terra Thomson will sing the National Anthem
- 4-H'ers chosen from the crowd will stand on dugouts and lead the 7th inning stretch
- Free Nebraska 4-H temporary tattoos • 4-H Garfield cookie jar giveaway

Wanted: 4-H Alumni for First Pitch!

Will you be the 4-H Alumni to throw the first pitch at the 4-H Theme Night Saltdogs Baseball game Friday, July 12? Interested 4-H alumni are invited to enter a short story describing a 4-H experience they had as a youth. The person who writes the winning story will throw the first pitch! Alumni may be former 4-H'ers from any state.

Entries must be received by Monday, July 1. All entries become property of Lancaster Cooperative Extension. Send entries to: Lancaster Cooperative Extension, Attn: Tracy Kulm, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528.

TICKETS: Lancaster County 4-H will be selling July 12th Saltdogs tickets to 4-H'ers, families & friends until July 5. **To buy your tickets, stop by the UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County office or satellite office.** Tickets are \$4 per person for general admission/grass berm seating. After July 5, tickets are available from the Saltdogs ticket office or at the gates.



HORSE BITS

Health Officials Wants Dead Birds to Help Determine Presence of West Nile Virus

The Nebraska Health and Human Services System is soliciting dead birds this season to monitor for the presence of the West Nile virus in Nebraska.

West Nile is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. In turn, the mosquito can pass the virus to humans, birds and some mammals, including horses. West Nile virus does not affect most livestock species except horses. Dogs and cats are rarely infected.

The virus first appeared in New York City in 1999 and has expanded in all directions. A total of 149 human cases have been identified, with 18 deaths.

There have been no reported cases in Nebraska. West Nile may reach Nebraska this year, according to Nebraska's state medical entomologist. "The virus has been found in Iowa and Missouri," said Wayne Kramer, medical entomologist with the Nebraska Health and Human Services

System. "Finding it this year in Nebraska is

very likely."

Nebraska has received \$120,000 this year for activities related to surveillance for the West Nile virus. The grant will fund mosquito trapping and testing to find out if the virus is present in the mosquito population and testing sentinel chicken flocks around the state.

It will also pay for testing dead birds, such as crows and blue jays. These types of birds are the most susceptible to the virus and likely to die from being infected by mosquitoes. It has been shown in other states that a surveillance system based on wild bird mortality is an effective method for detecting West Nile virus activity.

If dead crows, blue jays, hawks or owls are found that are not damaged or decayed, contact the Nebraska Health and Human Services System at (402) 471-0506 or 471-6994. The toll-free number for information about submitting dead birds for testing is 1-877-220-1237. Nebraska residents can also contact their local health departments, University of Nebraska Cooperative

Extension offices, Game and Parks offices and state veterinarians for assistance in reporting and submitting dead birds.

Most humans infected by the virus show very mild or no symptoms, generally a fever and headache. Less than one percent become seriously ill and that occurs within three to 15 days after the bite of the infected mosquito. Those seriously infected, particularly the elderly, display symptoms such as muscle weakness, stiff neck, disorientation, and convulsions. The greatest risk for infection is during late summer and early fall because the mosquitoes that transmit the virus increase during the summer.

"People should take extra precautions to protect themselves against mosquito bites," Kramer said. To reduce the risk of exposure to West Nile:

- Avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- If you are outside, cover up by wearing long-sleeved shirts, pants, shoes and socks.
- Use mosquito repellent.

- Eliminate mosquito breeding sites, such as standing water in tires, plastic containers, or similar water-holding containers.
- Change water in bird baths on a weekly basis.

"Quite a few horses have been infected as the virus has spread across the country," said David Steffen, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources veterinarian and director of UNL's Veterinary Diagnostic Center. "Many equine infections are subclinical, but there is a 40 percent death rate in clinically infected horses."

Steffen recommends that horse owners have their horses vaccinated against West Nile virus.

"Horses and humans are deadend carriers of the disease," he said, meaning the infection is not contagious when present in those species.

For more information on West Nile, visit the Health and Human Services System's Web site at www.hhs.state.ne.us/puh/epi/wnv/wnvindex.htm or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's site at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm (EK)

Gearing Up for 2002 Lancaster County Fair

2002 Lancaster County Fair
Wednesday, July 31–Sunday, Aug. 4
Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock

“4-H Centennial Celebration”

4-H Pre-Fair Schedule

- June 15 — All Animal Identification (sheep, goats, swine, breeding beef, bucket calves, dairy cattle) Due
- July 8 — All 4-H Preregistration Forms Due; All Animal Entry Deadline; Contests Registrations Due; and Parental Permission to Camp on Grounds Form Due
- July 17 — 4-H Horticulture/Tree/Grass-Weed Judging Contest; and 4-H Family and Consumer Science Judging Contest (Lancaster Extension Education Ctr.)
- July 19 — 4-H Demonstration Contest (Lancaster Extension Education Ctr.) [also Aug. 3 at Lancaster Event Center]
- July 24 — 4-H Style Revue Judging (Lancaster Event Ctr., Exhibit Hall)
- July 29 — Static Exhibit Check In (Lancaster Event Ctr., Lincoln Room)
- July 30 — Static Exhibit Judging (Lincoln Room)

Decorate a Barrel!

Help prepare the Lancaster Event Center for the Fair by participating in the paint a trash barrel activity on **Sunday, June 30** from 1:30–3:30 p.m. at the Event Center. Bring your brush and creative ideas. All paint will be supplied.

Food Booth Training

ALL County Fair food booth volunteers are encouraged to attend this training at the Lancaster Event Center, **Thursday, July 25**, 6–7 p.m. Learn about food safety, customer service and volunteer responsibilities. See you there!

Lasagna Feast!

Jim Davis, creator of the comic strip, Garfield, and former 4-H'er has designed Garfield promotional items to Celebrate 100 Years of 4-H. Recognizing this and the fact that Garfield loves lasagna, we are hosting a Lasagna Feast and Lasagna Cook-off at the County Fair, **Thursday, Aug. 1**. The public is invited to enter and “pay to judge” the entries and/or eat Valentino's Lasagna beginning at 6 p.m. in the Exhibit Hall at the Lancaster Event Center. Lasagna Feast tickets sold beginning July 31, in the Lincoln Room at the Lancaster 4-H Information Booth.

Lasagna Cook-off Rules:

1. Entries are due at 5:30 p.m., Aug. 1, at the Exhibit Hall, Lancaster Event Center. Judging at 5:45 p.m.

2. Recipe is required with entry and must be typed or printed on 8-1/2" x 11" sheet of paper.

3. Entry must consist of 9" x 13" pan of lasagna.

4. Classes: (1) traditional, (2) nontraditional (each class must have 2 or more entries for competition).

5. 1st and 2nd place prizes in each category.

6. Preregister by July 26 by calling 441-7180.

Interview Judging

4-H'ers have the opportunity to talk to judges about their fair exhibits and share the trials and lessons they learned. 4-H'ers also learn what the judge looks for and how to improve skills. This year 4-H'ers may interview judge **ONE** exhibit from each project area (for example: one item from Celebrate Art, one item from Design Decisions and one item from Tasty Tidbits). Refer to page 5 of the 4-H/FFA Fair Book for project areas that have interview judging. Call the office at 441-7180 to sign up for a five-minute time slot. Interview judging is **Tuesday, July 30**, in the Lincoln Room.

Show & Tell for Clover Kids

All Clover Kids, youth age 5–7 by January 1, 2002, are invited to show & tell their 4-H exhibits at the County Fair, **Saturday, Aug. 3**, starting at 1 p.m. Clover Kids Show & Tell is held in the Lincoln Room at the Lancaster Event Center. Youth are also invited to do a skit or song at this time. See page 7 of the 4-H/FFA Fair book for more information. To register, call 441-7180 by July 26, or sign up at the stationary exhibit area July 29, 4–8 p.m.

Public Speaking for Clover Kids

4-H Clover Kids are invited to attend a public speaking workshop at the County Fair. This fun, educational workshop will provide an opportunity to create a PSA (public service announcement) and record it on tape. An adult or older teen partner is strongly encouraged to join in the fun with their youth. This workshop is **Saturday, Aug. 3**, in the Exhibit Hall at the Lancaster Event Center. Workshops are held at 1 and 2 p.m. To register, call 441-7180 by July 26, or sign up at the stationary exhibit area July 29, 4–8 p.m.

County Fair Contests

Registration forms for Demonstration Contest and Style Revue are available at the extension office or may be downloaded at www.lancaster.unl.edu.

Call the office at 441-7180 by Monday, July 8 to register for all contests except Family & Consumer Science Judging Contest as no preregistration is needed for that contest. New information for Table Setting Contest is available from the office or is located at the above Web site.

All events will be held at the Lancaster Event Center, except for the Family & Consumer Science Judging Contest, the Horticulture Contest and one Demonstration Contest which are held at the Lancaster Extension Educational Center.

Horticulture Contest

Horticulture Contest is **Wednesday, July 17**, 10 a.m. Study material for the contest is available at the extension office.

Family & Consumer Science Judging Contest

Wednesday, July 17, 1 p.m. 4-H members will use their decision making skills in the junior division (8–11 years old) or senior division (12 years old and older as of January 1, 2002). Information packets are available at the office. This year's topics and resources for the contest:

JUNIOR DIVISION

Nutrition Fitness & Youth Web site [<http://deal.unl.edu/NFY>]

- Growth Spurts—Food Guide Pyramid
- Consumer U—Nutrition Food Panel

Home Environment—Create Your Corner (4-H 153)

- Cleaning (p. 8–13)
- Color (p. 14, 22–25)

Consumer Management—Attention Shoppers! (4-H 449)

- Selecting Jeans (p. 17–22)
- Clothing Care (p. 25–27)
- Sewing on a Button (p. 28)

Clothing & Textiles—Sewing for Fun (4-H 167)

- Sewing Tools (p. 5–11)

SENIOR DIVISION

Food and Nutrition—Nutrition Fitness & Youth Web site (<http://deal.unl.edu/NFY>)

- Growth Spurts—Nutrients
- Consumer U—Dietary Guidelines

Home Environment—Design Decisions (4-H 440)

- Wall Covering
- Flooring
- Design Principles

Clothing & Textiles—Clothing 2 (4-H 224)

- Fibers & Fabric Selection
- Sewing Basics

Entrepreneurship—Business Sense (4-H 457)

- Analyzing Customer Needs
- Record Keeping

Demonstration Contest

The Demonstration Contest is one of the best ways to share your expertise and ideas with others. Demonstrations can be done as an individual or as a team. There will be two demonstration contests: **Friday, July 19**, 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center and **Saturday, Aug. 3**, 8:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Event Center. See page eight of the 4-H/FFA Fair Book for categories.

Style Revue

Style Revue Judging is **Wednesday, July 24**, at the Exhibit Hall, Lancaster Event Center, starting at 8:30 a.m. The public Style Revue is **Wednesday, July 31**, 7 p.m. The public is invited to see 4-H members style their outfits.

Table Setting Contest

Choose a theme category (birthday, casual, formal, picnic) and plan a menu, design a centerpiece and place setting to compliment the theme. A new handout is available from the office. Contest is **Thursday, Aug. 1**, 5:30 p.m.

Public is Invited to Share Their Culture

The focus of the County Fair 4-H Table Setting Contest is “Celebrating Diversity.” This year we are inviting the public to share their cultures with contestants and attendees. Exhibit an example of a family celebration table setting and menu card. Bring own card table for display. Table must be set up from 5:30–8 p.m. To register/questions, call 441-7180.

Bicycle Safety Contest

4-H members do not need to be enrolled in the bicycle project to enter this contest. See 4-H/FFA Fair Book for rules. Contest is **Saturday, Aug. 3**, 9 a.m.

This year's Lancaster County Fair Books have been mailed to 4-H families and past Open Class exhibitors. They are available at the Lancaster County Extension office during business hours. A limited supply is also available at local banks, libraries and post offices throughout the community.

The 4-H & FFA version is available online at lancaster.unl.edu/4H

The Open Class version is available online at www.lancastereventcenter.com/fair.html

The July issue of THE NEBLINE will feature the fair schedule and highlights.

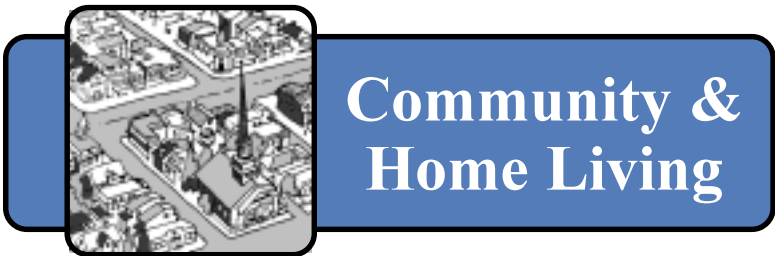
Volunteers Needed!

Volunteer helpers (ages 12 and over) are needed to help at the County Fair in the following capacities:

- check in exhibits on entry day (July 29)
- assist judges on judging day (July 30)
- put up project displays (July 30)
- help at the Fair Fun Day (Aug. 2)
- help in the information booth (July 31–Aug. 4)

Call 441-7180 to sign up. Your help is appreciated!





June is National Safety Month

According to the Nation Safety Council’s publication “Injury Facts 2001,” unintentional injury deaths totaled 97,300. Motor vehicle crashes caused 43,000 deaths, 29,500 people died in the home, 22,000 were killed in public places and 5,200 deaths occurred in the workplace.

The National Safety Council has some tips to help keep you and your family safe whether behind the wheel of your car, at home, in the community or at work.

Avoid Slip Ups

Sixty-five percent of the falls occur among persons 65 and over. Falls are the number one cause of injury-related death for males 80 and older and for females 75 and older.

Follow these tips to prevent slips and falls in your home:

- ✓ Keep the floor clear. Reduce clutter and safely tuck telephone and electrical cords out of walkways.
- ✓ Keep the floor clean. Clean up grease, water and other liquids immediately. Don’t wax floors.
- ✓ Use nonskid throw rugs to reduce your chance of slipping on linoleum.
- ✓ Install handrails in stairways. Have grab bars in the bathroom (by toilets and in tub/shower).
- ✓ Make sure living areas are well lit. We can all trip and fall in the dark
- ✓ Be aware climbing and reaching high places will increase your chance of a fall. Use a sturdy step stool with handrails when these tasks are necessary.
- ✓ Follow medication dosages closely. Using medication incorrectly may lead to dizziness, weakness and other side effects. These can all lead to a dangerous fall.

Safe Kids

A home may represent a haven of safety and security. But for young children, it can also be a place for potentially dangerous falls.

- ✓ Don’t leave babies alone on beds, changing tables or sofas.

- ✓ Always strap children into highchairs and strollers.
- ✓ Don’t let children play alone on fire escapes, high porches or balconies.
- ✓ Be aware of the danger of falls from windows by unsupervised young children. Keep your windows closed and locked when children are around. When opening windows for ventilation, open windows that a child cannot reach.
- ✓ Always use a rubber mat or slip resistant stickers in the tub. Never leave a child unattended in the tub.

Poison Precautions

Each year more than 6,000 people die and an estimated 300,000 suffer disabling illnesses as a result of unintentional poisoning by solid and liquid substances. Unintentional poisonings can happen to anyone, at any time, in any situation. Follow label directions for all products, including medication dosages, and proper storage or potentially toxic products are important precautions to heed.

- ✓ Have a “child-proof” cabinet that locks in the bathroom.
- ✓ Mothballs and crystals should be hung in containers. Keep out of the reach of children.
- ✓ Be sure your home is lead safe.
- ✓ Keep all substances in their original containers. Labels on original containers give important usage and safety information.
- ✓ Keep the numbers of your local poison control center or family doctor posted near the telephone.

Car Safety

- ✓ Always wear seat belts and be sure children are buckled in.

Prevention is Key

It is important to be aware of hazards around the home, community and workplace. Take time to remove hazards and use safety precautions at all times. (LB)

Prevent Crime the Pro-Active Way

Organize a Neighborhood Watch Program

Neighborhood Watch is a program to help residents protect themselves and their property. It is not a program of vigilante actions, nor does it use citizens to actually enforce the laws. It is about establishing a network of eyes and ears for law enforcement. Through a system of training and organizing neighborhoods, citizens become alert to suspicious activity and take an active role in reducing crime.

Organizing a Neighborhood Watch

1. Visit with friends and neighbors to determine their interest and support for a Neighborhood Watch Program.
2. Contact the Crime Prevention Division to organize a meeting. Rural residents can contact Deputy Bartek at 441-7727 and city residents can contact Officer McMeen or Officer Lloyd at 441-7261.
3. Determine an organizational meeting date and time. Usually these meetings are held



- at the home of the organizer.
4. During the meeting, the Crime Prevention Division will provide:
 - A deputy or officer to explain the Neighborhood Watch Program and answer questions.
 - Assistance in selecting a coordinator for your area—usually the person who organizes the meeting. (A color TV should be available for use during the meeting.)
 5. If an easily defined area exists for a Neighborhood Watch Program to operate, Neighborhood Watch signs will be posted. An area map of people from the neighborhood should be supplied.

The Services of a Neighborhood Watch

1. During the organizational meeting, a list of participants will be compiled and additional information distributed to all members in the watch area.
2. Once all guidelines are met, Neighborhood Watch signs will be posted.
3. When law enforcement has information pertinent to your area (i.e., a certain car or person to watch for, etc.), the Neighborhood Watch coordinator will be notified, who will forward the information on to members.
4. If anyone has something to report, they are to phone 441-6000. If anyone observes a crime in progress, they should call 911.
5. Newsletters from the Crime Prevention Division are distributed through the coordinator to participants.
6. Neighborhood Watch groups can organize various networks of communication between members as deemed necessary. (GB)

Partial Listing of Suspicious Activities To Watch For In Your Neighborhood

Not every stranger who comes into your neighborhood is a criminal by any means. There are many door-to-door salesmen, repairmen, and servicemen moving around our neighborhoods all the time, but criminals DO take advantage of this by pretending to be legitimate workmen. The Sheriff’s Office would rather investigate than be called when it is too late. Your call could save a life, prevent an injury, or stop a criminal act. BE ALERT. BE CONCERNED and CALL.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY	POSSIBLE CRIME
Going door to door in a residential area, especially if one or more persons goes to the rear of the residence.	Possible burglary suspects or trespassers.
Strangers loitering or driving through a neighborhood several times.	Possible burglary or larceny suspects.
Much human traffic to and from a certain residence, if it occurs on a daily or regular basis.	Possible vice, fence or narcotics operation.
Persons offering items for sale at a very low price.	Possibly trying to sell stolen property.
Vehicle moving slowly, without lights or driving in an aimless manner.	Possible burglar, drug pusher, or sex offender.
Parked vehicles containing one or more persons.	Possible lookouts for a burglary or robbery.
Abandoned vehicle parked on your block.	Possible stolen car.
Property in vehicles that is not normally found in vehicles, especially if observed at an unusual hour or if TV sets, stereos, guns or auto parts.	Possible stolen property.
Property carried by persons on foot, especially suspicious at an unusual place or hour. Very questionable if person is running or property is unwrapped.	Possible property just stolen in a burglary or robbery.
Open or broken doors and windows at a closed business or unoccupied residence.	Possible burglary in progress; completed burglary or vandalism.
Unusual noises such as gunshots, screaming or dogs barking continuously.	Possible burglary, assault, rape, etc.
A person exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms.	Person may be injured, under the influence of drugs, or otherwise needing medical attention.

Cultural Insights: Water Resources in Iraq



Boshra Rida
Extension Volunteer In
Service To America

Iraq has a total area of 438,320 square kilometers including 4,910 square kilometers of inland water.

Rainfall: Very little rainfall occurs in Iraq, except in the northeast and agriculture mainly

depends upon river water. Rainfall is heaviest in the north-east and fall mostly between October and May. On the central plains, less than six inches fall annually. The desert areas receive virtually no rainfall.

Surface water: Both Euphrates and Tigris are international rivers originating their source in Turkey. The Euphrates river is the longest river in southwest Asia with 2,700

kilometers in length. It’s formed by two major tributaries which join together, then the Euphrates River follows a southeastern route to enter Syria, where it joins two more tributaries then enter Iraq. The average annual flow of the Euphrates as it enters Iraq is estimated at 30 cubic kilometer. As it passes downstream it loses a major portion of its waters to irrigation canals and see *WATER IN IRAQ* on page 11

Visit 4-H Embryology Egg Cam!



Visit the 4-H Embryology site online at www.lancaster.unl.edu for Egg Cam, which provides a live view as incubated eggs give way to new baby chicks. The site also features fun activities, photos of the embryos as they develop, and educational resources for parents and teachers.

NFBA
continued from page 1

places where their particular costs are out of line. By reevaluating expenses in those specific areas, they might find ways to trim expenses and thus improve profitability. For example: if fertilizer expense is higher than the top 33 percent group, one might want to visit with their extension educator about their fertilizer program to see if they can cut down on expense without hurting yield.

In the summary report for 2001, Bredensteiner reports, "Production efficiency continues to be the biggest difference between the high profit 1/3 and the average. The top operators find a way to accomplish the difficult task of controlling costs while maintaining production."

The NFBA is currently accepting new memberships. Call the NFBA office at (402) 472-1399 to request an informational brochure and enrollment form. Membership fees are based on level of services desired and size of operation. For fee information, call the NFBA office. Printed copies of the 65-page summary report books are available for \$30 from the NFBA office, 110 Mussehl Hall, Lincoln, NE 68583-0719.



BARLEY STRAW
continued from page 1

we haven't had a local supply. Even so, we get a number of calls from pond owners each year asking where they can buy barley straw for algae control. I talked with one person who had driven over 400 miles round trip to buy a few bales from a grower in west central Nebraska. They intend to use it for a pond in a horse pasture. I will be monitoring their success this year."

Johnson plans to market bales measuring 14 x 16 x 18 inches for algae control. The smaller sized bale will have more surface area per pound of straw to react with the water as compared to full-sized hay bales. He is still exploring marketing

venues for his product. One avenue being explored is wholesaling quantities to garden centers and farm supply stores in the metro area. He is also making plans to market the straw directly to consumers.

Since the straw must be submerged at the right depth to be effective, Johnson is planning to offer a complete package, including the straw bales, tether ropes, anchor weights and floats to keep the straw at the optimum distance below the water surface even when it becomes waterlogged. The straw will need to be replaced each spring but the anchoring system should be reusable for several years. "The small bales will be easier to handle and will allow the user to distribute the straw more uniformly through the pond," Johnson said. "They can buy the complete package or they can buy only the straw bales and design their own anchoring system."

For more information about algae control in ponds, see "Controlling Algae in Ponds and Lakes" on p. 4 of this issue. (TD)



CARPENTER ANTS
continued from page 3

and put back together again (even if you have brick or stone). Carpenter ants are not smart enough to know that your home is not a tree and that the ants should only build their nests in the tree in your yard. If your home has suitable nest sites, the carpenter ants take advantage of those just like they would in any tree.

To prevent carpenter ants from nesting in your home, keep your home in good repair. Are there places on your home where the wood is damaged (usually by water) and rotting? Does your home have gutters and are they in good repair? Is the roof older or leaking? What about windows and doors? Do you have or have you had plumbing problems inside your home? All of these conditions make it possible for wood to become damaged, start rotting and eventually create a potential

site for carpenter ants to nest in your home.

For more information on carpenter ants and treating a colony on your home, visit <http://lanaster.unl.edu>. This Web site offers educational resources in both audio and print. You can also pick up the free educational resource, "Carpenter Ants" (004) at the extension office. (SC)



WATER IN IRAQ
continued from page 10

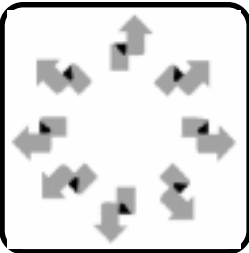
Al-Hamar marsh. The Tigris is the second longest river in southwest Asia at 1,840 kilometers. It has its springs in Turkey, but the main contribution to the river comes from the tributaries in Iraq. These tributaries are: the Greater Zab, the Lesser Zab, Al-Ashaim and Diyala. The average annual runoff as it enters Iraq is estimated at 21.2 cubic kilometer. Extensive irrigation and diversification canals remove around 70-80 percent of its water before joining the Euphrates. Before the confluence of the two rivers at the city of Qurna to form Shatt Al-Arab River which is only 190 kilometers and flows in the Persian Gulf, the Euphrates flows for about 1,000 kilometers and the Tigris for about 1,300 kilometers respectively within the Iraq territory. Many barrage or dam reservoirs existed at Samara, Dukan, Darband, Khan and Al-Qadisiyah on the Tigris River and Habbaniyah and Al-Hindya on the Euphrates.

The marsh lands region is situated in the south of the alluvial plain. This area which once covered 5,800-7,700 square miles have now shrunk to just 580-770 square miles. The vanishing of these vast wetland resources is attributable to two main causes: upstream dams and drainage schemes.

Ground water resources:

Good quality subterranean water has been found in the foothills of the mountains in the northeast of the country at a depth of 5-50 meters and in the area along the right bank of the Euphrates at a depth of 300 meters.

Miscellaneous



4-H Summer Camps

Open to all youth,
4-H and non 4-H

4-H Summer Camps held at the Eastern NE 4-H Center near Gretna are safe, educational and absolutely fun!!

Registrations are still being accepted. For more information call (402) 332-4496 or visit online at <http://4h.unl.edu>.



- Wet'n Wild I June 17-19
- Wet'n Wild II June 20-22
- Spotlight on Talents June 24-26
- Boldly Bound June 30-July 3
- Niobrara Trip July 7-10
- First Timers July 12-13
- Clover Kids Day July 13
- Outdoor Skills July 15-18
- High Adventure July 29-Aug 1

2002 Household
Hazardous Waste
Collections

DATE & TIME	LOCATION
June 14 3-7 p.m.	Union College Parking Lot, North 52 and Cooper Street
June 15 9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department 3140 N Street
August 3 9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Nebraska Wesleyan University North 56 and Huntington Streets
September 21 9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Pfizer Inc. 601 W. Cornhusker Highway
October 19 9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department 3140 N Street
November 16 9 a.m.-3 p.m.	State Fair Park 4-H Youth Complex

- ITEMS THAT YOU CAN BRING FOR DISPOSAL
- Heavy metals: items containing mercury such as thermometers and thermostats.
 - Solvents: mineral spirits, turpentine, paint strippers and thinners, oil-based paints, varnishes, stains, polishes and waxes.
 - Pesticides: weed killers, garden sprays, wood preservatives, roach powder, rat poisons. You may also bring EPA banned products, like DDT, chlordane, 2,4,5-T, pentachlorophenol, silvex, PCP and Dursban.
 - PCB's: Ballasts from old fluorescent fixtures and capacitors from old appliances including radios, motors and televisions.

Leave products in their *original* container and keep the label intact. Open, leaking or rusted containers should be placed in a clear plastic bag during transport. Do not mix chemicals.

DO NOT BRING: latex paint, medicines, explosives or ammunition, fertilizers, used oil, general household trash, antifreeze or batteries.

These collections are for households only; not businesses. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections. For more specific information, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8040.

This Lincoln High grad is designing her own Nebraska degree.



Emily Chen a marketing/merchandising major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, didn't have to go far to find a unique opportunity to study both fashion and business. But when she graduates, she knows her Nebraska education can take her anywhere.

"I am able to take the textiles, clothing and design classes I love and get the business background I'll need to survive in the real world."

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The NEBLINE

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Lancaster County



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Phone: 441-7180
Web site: lancaster.unl.edu

Fax: 441-7148 • TDD: 441-7180
NUFACTS Information Center: 441-7188
Composting Hotline: 441-7139

All programs and events listed in this newsletter will be held
(unless noted otherwise) at:
Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Rd. (event rooms posted), Lincoln
Lobby Phone: 441-7170

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NEBLINE
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- ☐ Change of Address

Comments _____

Story Idea(s) _____

Return to:
University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A • Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Extension Calendar

All programs and events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

JUNE

- 12 4-H Practice Family & Consumer Science Judging 1 p.m.
12 4-H Practice Demonstration 2:30 p.m.
12 4-H Horse VIPS Meeting 7 p.m.
13 4-H Photography Workshop 7 p.m.
13 4-H Rabbit VIPS Meeting 7 p.m.
14 Composting Workshop & Demonstration (University Pl. Park, 50th & Colby) . 8:30 a.m.
15 All 4-H Animal ID’s Due (sheep, goats, swine, breeding beef, bucket calves, dairy cattle)
17 Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce, *Northeast Family Center* 5–9 p.m.
18–21 4-H Clover College
18–21 District Horse Shows—East, *Crete, Fullerton, S. Sioux City, Wahoo*
20 Fair Board Meeting, *Lancaster Event Center* 7:30 p.m.
24–27 District Horse Shows—West, *Arthur, Bridgeport, Burwell, Holdrege*
26–28 4-H ExpoVisions, *UNL campus*
28 Pesticide Container Recycling, *Farmers Cooperative Bennet* 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

JULY

- 2 4-H Council Meeting, *Lancaster Event Center* 7 p.m.
8 All 4-H Animal Entries for Lancaster County Fair Due
8 4-H MQA Training 6 p.m.
10 4-H Horticulture Contest Workshop 2 p.m.
10 4-H Horse VIPS Meeting 7 p.m.
11 Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce, *Northeast Family Center* 5–9 p.m.
11 4-H Rabbit VIPS Meeting 7 p.m.
12 Extension Board Meeting 8 a.m.
12 Pesticide Container Recycling, *Firth Co-op Firth* 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
12 4-H Centennial Theme Night at Saltdogs, *Haymarket Park* 7:05 p.m.
14 4-H Teen Council Meeting, *call for location* 3–5 p.m.
14–18 State Horse Expo, *Grand Island*
17 4-H Horticulture, Grass & Weed I.D., Tree I.D. Contests 10 a.m.
17 4-H Family Consumer Science Judging 1:30 p.m.
19 Pesticide Container Recycling, *Farmers Cooperative Waverly* 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
19 4-H Demonstration Contest 1 p.m.
22 4-H Fair Superintendent Meeting, *Lancaster Event Center* 7 p.m.
24 4-H Style Revue Judging, *Lancaster Event Center* 8:30 a.m.
25 4-H Food Booth Training, *Lancaster Event Center* 6–7 p.m.
29 Entry Day for Lancaster County Fair Static, *Event Center* 4–8 p.m.

July 31-Aug. 4 LANCASTER COUNTY FAIR, *Lancaster Event Center*

Wanted: 4-H Alumni for First Pitch at Saltdogs July 12

Will you be the 4-H Alumni to throw the first pitch at the 4-H Theme Night Saltdogs Baseball game Friday, July 12? Interested 4-H alumni are invited to enter a short story describing a 4-H experience they had as a youth. The person who writes the winning story will throw the first pitch! Alumni may be former 4-H’ers from any state. Entries must be received by Monday, July 1. All entries become property of Lancaster Cooperative Extension. Send entries to: Lancaster Cooperative Extension, Attn: Tracy Kulm, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528.

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska

Lincoln Cooperative Extension

in Lancaster County

SATELLITE OFFICE

located in northeast Lincoln at

LANCASTER EVENT CENTER

84th & Havelock

Access:

- Educational resource materials
- Insect pest/plant diagnostic drop-off
- 4-H staff and resources

Before visiting the satellite office, call ahead to make sure staff are available to assist you.

Main office at 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A

Phone for both offices: 441-7180

Visit us virtually at: lancaster.unl.edu